

JERSEY BEAT

ISSUE #21

JUNE/JULY 1985



NOISE

SUPPLEMENT

Swans

KILLDOZER

THE SCENE IS NOW

Winter Hours

MODS Along
The Hudson

**MIRACLE
LEGION**

BR  KEN
PR  MISES

SAMHAIN



Attacker

Sonic Youth

mod
Fun
Coast to
Coast



JERSEY BEAT

THE FANZINE FOR
UNACCOMPANIED MALES AND
GIRLS LEFT OFF THE GUEST LIST

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JIM TESTA

VOL. IV NO. II

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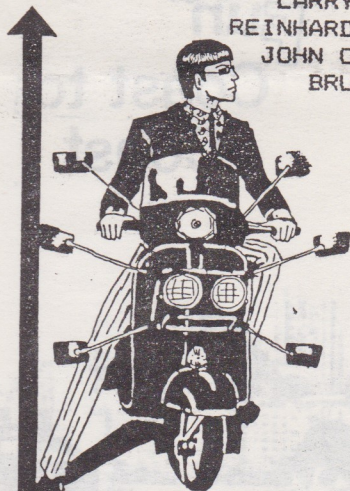
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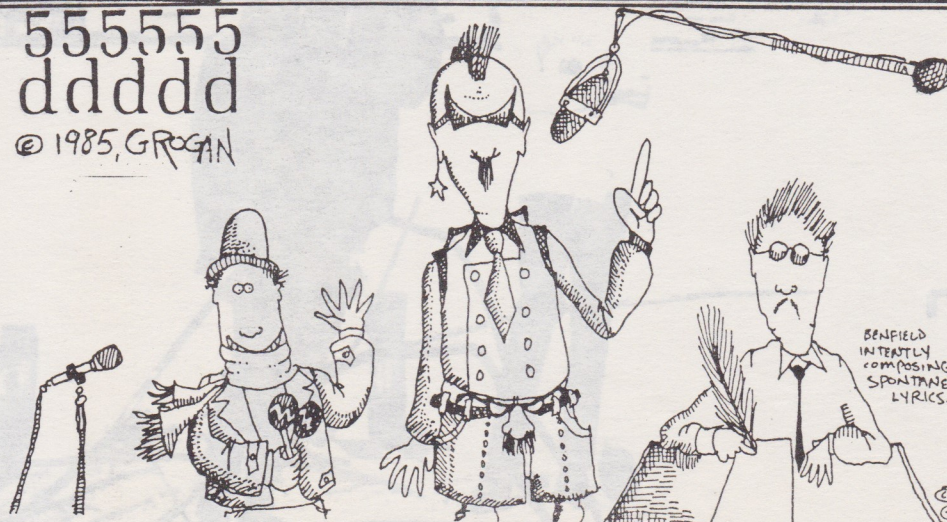
BACK ISSUES

We recently sacked the Jersey Beat warehouses in Paramus Park and discovered a limited supply of these back issues. They're \$1 each, postpaid; order by issue # please and act quickly - when these are gone, that's it!

- #1 - JITTERZ, Johnny Dirt intv'w, Anti-Danceteria editorial, Hardcore
- #2 - BONGOS, Wind At Night, Adrenalin O.D.
- #3 - INDIVIDUALS, Bongos, Chris Moffa, Glenn Morrow pinup, A.O.D. pinup
- #5 - CATHOLIC GIRLS, UXB, Smithereens
- #9 - NEW BANDS ISSUES, Mod Fun, Abstracts, Young Turks, Chronic Sick
- #10 - HARDCORE, TMA, Dirt compilation, Genocide, Mod Fun pinup
- #11 - BONGOS, Feelies, Reggae
- #15 - HARDCORE - U.S. Chaos, Major Conflict, ADD, Mourning Noise, Kraut pinup
- #19 - MORE NEW BANDS, Bandables, Human Switchboard, Dramarama, Das Damen
- #20 - BONGOS, Raunchhands, Gutbank, New Breed, Garage Bands, '84 poll results

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WORKING ON THE ALBUM
"ART OF FIRST PSYCHIC GREATNESS"
WITH POP-JAZZ-FUNK PROPHET,
LINK GOD III.

BENFIELD
INTENTLY
COMPOSING
SPONTANEOUS
LYRICS.

GROGAN 85

On The Road With

by Peter Snell

Mod Fun describes their recent visit to California as "The Do It Yourself Tour." The band played six dates in San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco/Berkeley during their three week stay. They did interviews with San Diego's Directions and Sound Affects The Underground fanzines and with two Frisco-area zines, Wha-a-a-m and Hepcat. In addition, Linda Ryan of KUSF, the University of San Francisco's influential radio station, interviewed the group.

The tour became a possibility when Mod Fun's first single, "I Am With You," enjoyed an enthusiastic response from California's thriving mod community. Liz Pepin, publisher of Wha-a-a-m, and Bart Mendoza, leader of San Diego's mod Manual Scan, invited Mod Fun out for a visit. With the help of other West Coast contacts, the group completed arrangements for the tour over the phone and, with two confirmed gigs and promises of several more, left New Jersey for "the Coast" the last week of March.

"I think you kind of vegetate sitting in a jacuzzi, drinking champagne, and doing nothing," commented drummer Chris Collins on the band's stay in Los Angeles, their first stop. "California was fun," he added, but the 3000 mile trip west was "a bore." Among other complaints, Collins said that L.A. audiences seemed more interested in posing and "looking cool" than in music or dancing. One highlight of L.A. was a chance to comb the boutiques of Melrose Avenue. And singer/guitarist Mick London in particular was impressed by the size and strength of L.A.'s "paisley underground." As part of their L.A. visit, the band played the famous Madame Wong's and the Cavern, where the likes of the Bangles' Susanna Hoffs and the 3 O'Clock's Michael Guitierrez came to see them.

By contrast, the group expressed unconditional praise for both San Diego and San Francisco. San Diego is home for the largest mod contingent in the U.S. They are, by Chris' account, the friendliest people he met while on the road. The scooter - the status vehicle among mods - is extremely popular in the sunny climate of San Diego, and the city boasts nearly half a dozen scooter clubs. It is possible that the unity among the mod scene noted by bassist Bob Strete is due to these clubs, which function not only as social organizations, but also as channels through which the energies of the city's enthusiastic mods can be focused.

MOD
FUN



CONTINUED ON
NEXT PAGE

MOD FUN MEETS MR. BUBBLE

I previewed most of 90 Wardour Street a few months ago when Mod Fun performed the songs at CBGB, and it must be said - not only was I impressed with Mick London's new breed of songwriting, but damn near anxious to hear these diamonds-in-the-rough trapped on vinyl. Live, the songs seemed well-crafted - the backings were tight, and the vocal arrangements were interestingly complex. So the only things that could stop this record from becoming a masterpiece would be: 1) if the songs were marred by the production; and 2) if they did something stupid. Well, I hate to say it, but Wardour Street ALMOST hits a dead end 'cause 1) the songs were marred by the production and 2) they did something stupid.

Now this isn't to say that the record's no good; I just think it could have been megatons better. The poor production may be excusable but the band's little trip into psychedelia is just plain stupid. Hey, I know I'm being pretty heavy with the big 'S' word here, but it sure sounds like the acid these kids thought they were taking turned out to be Mr. Bubble. The Syd Barrett effects ruin some of their best material and possibly lost any chances for much-deserved airplay: "A Minute Twenty" (a GREAT song!!) with its polished pop structure and Byrdish harmonies, could have been tailor-made for summer radio, but their fun-in-the-studio ending damaged it worse than those doowop overdubs on those post-mortem Buddy Holly recordings. Imagine if you will McGuinn recording "Feel A Whole Lot Better" in his Notorious Byrd Brothers stage - yuchh, it's that easy to crack a chestnut, and unfortunately, Mick & Co. learned it too late.

90 WARDOUR STREET
Mod Fun
Midnight, Mini-LP

by Mike Stark

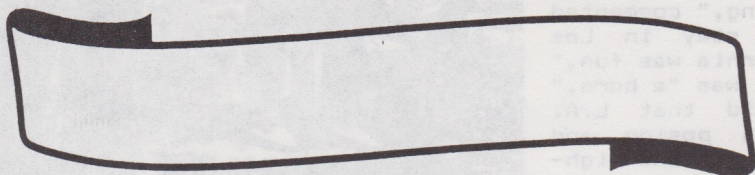


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90 WARDOUR STREET (Cont.)

Luckily, only Side 2 really suffers from the childish acid eating. "Moving & Grooving" is a fun stroll down the Motor City, and "Fade To Mirror" is an excellent example of capturing the style of early Pink Floyd without the druggy novelty noises. Both "Tyme Is Now" and "We Got Tyme" (like the Creation, huh?) show that Mick ain't no guitar slouch, and his team of Bob Strete (bass) and Chris Collins (drums) is growing right with him. Gee, the only outright dog is "The American Dream," which proves you can take the Paul Weller away from the boy but... Mock Brit accents (lose 'em!), Jamish chord progressions, and a once-again journey into the center of Barrett's mynd make this one on all counts a throwaway.

Guess I'm a bit disappointed with 90 Wardour Street 'cause I expected too much. Mod Fun is a very ambitious band - maybe too ambitious at their young age - but the potential is definitely obvious. This trio will be taken a lot more seriously after they find a producer who will help them drop the "mod" crap and stick with just the "fun." Me bets me scooter on this, Jack!



REVIEWS

by Jim Testa

WHO BETRAYS ME...AND OTHER HAPPIER SONGS
The Cucumbers
Fake Doom Records

The Cucumbers and I go way back: I saw their first gig, and they played at the benefit that helped me start Jersey Beat. Now it's 3 years later and the band has released their first LP, with a new rhythm section (Charles Hargrove on bass, Yuergen Renner on drums) and a passel of throbbing, catchy pop songs that put the Cukes in the forefront of Hoboken's 2nd Generation.

"You're Still Here In My Arms" is, quite frankly, my favorite pop ballad of the year, but singers Deena Shoskes and Jon Fried have more on their minds than romance. Their twitchy, danceable, new-wavey songs bristle with wit and irony, their voices intertwine in irresistible boy/girl harmony, and their guitars always manage to make a left turn in some totally unpredictable key whenever they assay a solo. A few years ago, when the Individuals were my fave combo, I might have called this music "quirky"; but Jon and Deena aren't quirks, they're romantic idealists who express their affection for each other and the world in pop music. Given the new dimensions added by the rhythm section - Hargrove offering a funky groove not present earlier, Renner a whipcrack precision on drums - and the crisp production by John Cale-sideman Dave Young, Who Betrays Me should measure up as one of the hot college-radio and club records of the year.

Fake Doom Records, Lockbox 7295, NYC 10116



MOD FUN

Continued from last page

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San Francisco's mod community may be small in comparison; yet, as exemplified by the graphically innovative Wha-a-a-m, it perhaps has the most style. In San Francisco, mods and psychedelics share many of the same interests in music and clothes. There is a blending of styles particularly well-suited to Mod Fun's current musical offering of slick 60's grooves and psychedelic crunch.

"In New York, the people who come to see us are fans; in California, they're more like believers," said London. They're also younger. While the legal drinking age in California is 21, clubs are open to those 18 and older. Mick believes that a younger audience can identify easily with Mod Fun, but that older fans can appreciate the music as well. "The music is not your average 18-year old music. It's more sophisticated than punk, which is what you expect 18-year olds to play. We were playing that stuff when we were 16 or 15, even. Now we have a more rough pop sound."

By touring California, the group was able to capitalize on the considerable exposure they received from their single. Said Chris: "I wanted them to hear us live. If you hear two songs from a band, and you like them, after a while you'll want to hear more." Mick added that the band's live performance improved to meet the demands of the tour. He sensed a new energy in the band, "something special...I can feel it when we play. Each night you have to play as good, if not better, than the night before. There can be no off nights."

Bob Strete said the band wants to go back to California as soon as possible ("By airplane!" added Chris emphatically). More immediately, the band returned home to the release of their lp, 90 Wardour Street, on Midnight Records, and their first shot at a "big" New York club, a Memorial Day Weekend show at the Peppermint Lounge with the Vipers.

"Going out to California shows how serious we are about the band," said Bob. "As a band, we've realized we can do it, and we're going to stay together."

by Pattie Kleinke



Last year, I made the big decision to give up writing (except for my day job). When I saw Winter Hours open for the Bongos a month ago, I knew I wanted to write about them.

So one Saturday afternoon recently Michael and Joseph, guitarist and lead singer respectively, came over and shared some thoughts about Winter Hours with me.

The first matter at hand was clearing up a little haziness on my part regarding their new monicker - Winter Hours. Formerly Ward 8, the band's new name conjured up visions of British synth-pop duos - y'know, where one member is Winter and the other is Hours.

"We had several other ideas for names and one of them was Violet Hours," said Joe. "We liked the Hours part of it so we just tossed around different words. Then we thought about the season that fit our type of music and what season we all liked. Everyone kind of likes Winter. A lot of people think winter is a drag 'cos you can't go surfing, but you can stay home and read and write and be productive."

Winter Hours, lest we forget, is made up of five talented guys from Lyndhurst, NJ: Bob Perry, guitar, vocals; Joseph Marquis, lead vocals, percussion; Robert Messing, bass, vocals; Michael Carlucci, guitar; and John Albanese, drums.

They met through the Mutual Admiration Society - that is, they used to go see each other's bands perform in local clubs. Also, Michael, the group's elder statesman, gave guitar lessons to the others.

Joe elaborated: "It's interesting how this particular lineup got together because Bob Perry and John, our current drummer, and me were in a band together years ago while [the others] were in Autonomy. Then they got me and little by little people from my old band got into this one and it became a merge of the two."

Bob, Joe, and Michael share songwriting duties. One of the guitar players comes up with a chord pattern and Joe provides melody and lyrics. Or sometimes, they'll go at it not knowing what each other is playing, just feeling it. They all read music; i.e., they apply theory when necessary.

While most bands write about "moon, June, and spoon," these guys go a little deeper. Joe again: "Most of our songs are kind of a combination of personal things that happen to me and personal themes in combination with themes from Greek mythology to Shakespeare. I'm basically of the mind that nothing has changed much in 2500 years as far as human beings go and that shows up in a lot of songs. Very universal themes like suffering into truth."

So that's what they're teaching these days at Rutgers, where Joe is/was a student before taking a leave of absence to concentrate on the band.

Michael, who had been quietly sitting by, added, "Along with that, we don't want to come off as being too lofty and detached. I would like to be a commercial band but I don't think we'd do it in the usual way. Our music is layered in that we have different layers lyrically and musically where maybe a housewife can relate to one of the songs and maybe a college professor can pick something else out. Go a little deeper. Something like the Doors did or what bands in the '60's did where they were very popular with a large cross-section of people."

Winter Hours

THE JERSEY BEAT INTERVIEW!



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WINTER HOURS

CONT. FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

The Doors? Yeah, these guys don't profess the influences most writers would peg on them: In their very early 20's, most of Winter Hours grew up listening to Alice Cooper, Elton John, glitter rock... Joe heard Sixties music like the Doors and Stones from his babysitters. They also listen to international folk music and John is really into jazz. Michael's into '60's oldies. But they agreed the Doors seemed to be their No. 1 influence, followed by Fairport Convention, Genesis, Roxy Music, Peter Gabriel, Eno, the Allman Brothers, and Eric Clapton.

Lately, Winter Hours has been playing larger venues, including promising dates with Lloyd Cole and the Commotions, which may lead to European connections. Their new demo, the second produced by Bongo Rob Norris, is making the rounds of the big labels. How did they hook up with Norris?

Michael said, "We met him at Maxwells and I asked him if he'd come into the studio and help us mix down some songs." Michael had also worked with Norris in a short-lived Velvet Underground cover band, Foggy Notion.

Future plans are hazy - all these things take time - but for the present, the band's members are all keeping their day jobs and hoping for the best. But we should be hearing more from Joe, Michael, Robert, Bob, and John - collectively, Winter Hours.

NAKED RAYGUN



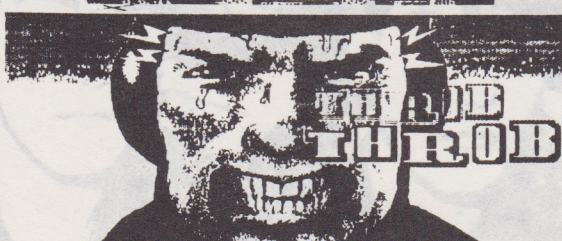
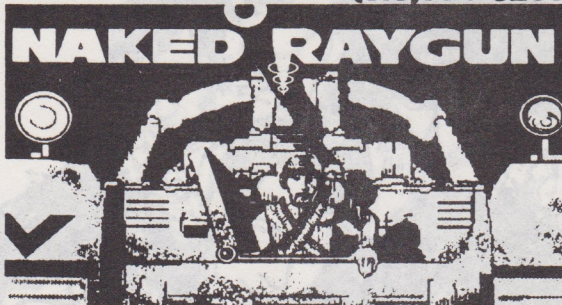
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MIRACLE LEGION


MIRACLE LEGION
The Backyard
Incas, EP

start
believing

Faster than a speeding Dumptruck, more powerful than a Love Tractor, able to cause more Commotion than Lloyd Cole & Co. ... Miracle Legion, barely out of high school and based in Branford, Connecticut, enters the fray of the New Age guitar bands - y'know, all the combos that get immediately compared to Television - and more than hold their own. Side One's a dense, swirling mix of guitar, guitar, and more guitar, abetted by throbbing bass and strong vocals. The side starts with the enigmatic reverie of "The Backyard" and ends with the pounding punk fury of "Closer To The Wall." Side Two gets even dreamier and more introspective, with a sadly beautiful acoustic ballad closing the record on a classy note. There's more than enough to make me eager for more, and given their age, there's no telling where they'll go from here. Miracles? Start believing.

- Jim Testa

VIDEO...



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BACKROOM BUZZ

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buzz now



by Mike Stark

I had my writer buddy Alex Haley help me trace the roots of The Secret Service, a new Mod band hailing from the conservative suburbs of Long Island, and after months of extensive musical research, he found that these guys don't have any Anglo-tied roots at all. Yes, it might sound like a mighty anachronism, but there's nothing more American than the Service's approach to Mod music - Mod is Jimmy Reed, Stax attacks, old Bo Diddley licks, and Thunderbird wine - and nobody knows better than these guys. They're not trying to be English and lordy-lordy, they're not trying to be black either; but they are striving for something no other New York band has - a little bit of sould. Ah, soul, an important ingredient for the mod menu.

Although they've just been together since February, The Service is tighter than a hundred dollar pair of Jappy jeans, and nowhere near as hard to get into. Now, this isn't saying that James Brown is ready to replace the Fabulous Flames with 'em, but these guys really are worthy of a showdown at the Apollo themselves. They do justice to Mr. Showbusiness' "Shout & Shimmy," their cover of "Mr. Pitiful" is far from pitiful, and their imaginative arrangement of Brother Ray's "Sticks 'N Stones" sure proves that their record collections go back further than a Creation reissue. Guess that a band that lists their major musical influence as "Black Women" would understand the true meaning of Rhythm & Blues.

Lead singer Wayne Manors (ouch!) is the spiritual offspring of Eric Burdon and Etta James. His pipes are right out of the gospel zone, and he's one of the few Sixties' styled frontmen who understand that good harp blowing is sorta like love-making; it ain't just mindless blowing. Bassist Jim Gange comes from the Paul Samwell Smith School of lightning runs, filling out the Service sound like the tube during rush hour. Drummer Steve Pepper provides enough energy to get the whole club dancing (those of you who



THE SECRET SERVICE: NEW MODS ON THE BLOCK

AMERICAN
MOD
SOUND



know me, know I never dance - but damn if my toes weren't tapping a zillion miles an hour). And guitarist Rob Normandin strikes a tremendous shrine to Townshend when he's strumming his Rickenbacker. Unlike most three pieces, these guys sound FULL and are full of watchable energy!!!

I tip my bowler to this combo. They're new, so I can excuse their overabundance of covers, but I have faith: The few originals I heard are real head spinners, and more are on the way. Just remember, you guys, groups like the Kinks and the Stones started up as Berry/Diddley cover bands before they penned those hits. Maybe someday the next generation of suburban mod bands will learn their licks off a Secret Service album, and maybe they'll learn the truly American roots of Mod music too!

BURN ALL YOUR RECORDS
The Scene Is Now
Lost Records, LP

Well. This is a pleasant surprise! There've been plenty of folks what've cobbled together's oeuvre's from scraps of free-jazz, avant-noise mongery and rock goofiness over the years but The Scene Is Now is one of the few to hit on a synthesis that is substantially unprecedented. The 20 songs on Burn All Your Records are forthrightly good-natured, technically demanding, exact in their details, and very emotional in their aesthetic prerogatives. An honestly joyful noise. Ha-cha!!

- Howard Wuelfing

Lost Records, 361 Canal St., NYC 10013.



THE SCENE IS NOW

ATTENTION

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

Attention
Mb3 Records

Like Okayville. Lead singer Martin Foley affects a viable post-Dylan snarl and guitarster Billy Hopkins puts some nice, jangly noises up and back. Still no hooks here such as T-Bone [Burnett] would surely proffer and none of that concerted kinesis Mark Knopfler generates. Personally, I like bassist Bill McKeever's baroque-pop solo spot, "Statesong," best. This dude's got a right purty & for-real distinctive vocal style. Like to hear more from him.

- Howard Wuelfing

HISTORY KICKS YOU
Whirling Dervishes
WM Records, Mini-LP

Agile fingers, perceptive minds, enough money to buy enough effects boxes and synthesizers to correctly put across their authentic mastery of contemporary British pop styles. If the Whirling Dervishes were from Glasgöw instead of Garwood, NJ, they'd undoubtedly have toured with Reflex and been writ up in NME's Thrills Section. So...there's no excuse for this utterly rote read-through of received gestures from a milieu most hip Amerockats universally recognize as played out.

Uh, yeah, this is every bit as good as Wang Chung. You can quote me to the Geffen A&R Dept!

- Howard Wuelfing

WM Records, Box 68, Garwood, NJ 07027

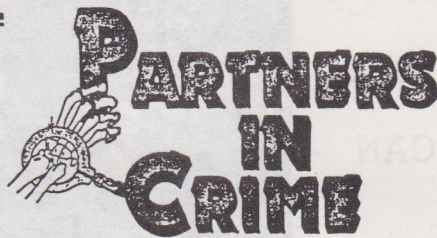
NO BIG DEAL

Partners In Crime
Mutha Records, LP

There seems to be no end in sight to the number of amazingly hot punk ensembles roaring out of the good ol' Garden State. Special thanx to Mutha Records for preserving all this angst-ridden insanity on vinyl. Most of the bands on this label blur the boundaries between HC/HM/early punk and they've released about 20 disks so far. Bravo!

Partners In Crimes, once known as ROX, are a no-nonsense guitar/bass/drums unit, fronted by the lovely/sex/tough-looking singer, Dawn Gaye. They've previously released a 6-song EP. Musically, they remind me of the Stooges - a thick mass of snarling distorto guitars, determined to send us all to hell/heaven. No easy feat! I'm a sucker for good sludge guitar and both J. Howard Duff and Mike Fox roar thick menacing screaming alternating lead guitars. Their tunes are anthems, their melodies direct, and you can jump right into singing along with their choruses: "I Wanna Drive You," "You Suck"... You know these ain't love songs! With so much venom in their music, I would've pushed Dawn's voice closer to the edge in the mix, but no big deal. This disk will knock your sox off nonetheless. And when they play your neighborhood, what else can I say - GO SEE 'EM!!!

- Bruce Gallanter



REVIEWS

by Mike Stark

What does a brainy band named KILLDOZER do after they discover that half a dozen other brainy bands share the same TV-movie derived name? Well, I suggest they organize some type of bout for the title - not one of those wimpy battle of the bands, mind you, but a real bloody, barbed-wire fence match - winner keeping the prestigious name, the championship belt, the girl, the gold watch, everything - the losers escaping merely with their misshapen lives.

Now, if I were Nick The Greek (I'm not, relax!), I'd lay odds on New York's Killdozer. They'd beat the ghostly shit out of that Chicago Killdozer, or any other new Dozer for that matter. Think of 'em as a cross between William Castle, pro wrestling, and Disneyland's Space Mountain: they is definitely not for the faint of heart, their music is cool & driving, and live, they rock harder than the male fans of Iris Chacon!!

The Dozer I'm rooting for is made up of four New York University students, who soon learnt (AS DID I) that the school is chockfull of musical idiots and "fucking pansies." They were misunderstood from Day 1, mistreated, and eventually banned from campus (Gee, sounds like a Salinger book or something). So a few of the more disillusioned members dropped out and put their tuition money into something more important than sheepskin - they pressed it into vinyl! VOILA! thus is the history behind their country/noise tinged LP, There's No Mistaking Quality.

I applaud Domino Records (drummer), Clay Gomez (guitar), Yea Lopez (bass) and Mr. Brown (the singer, not the celery tonic) for blowing off their art school education. There're bigger fish to fry out there - drop out of school, get a guitar, learn how to play, have a few milliseconds of fame, fall on yr face, wash dishes, and soon die a Hank Williams' style death! AH, only in America... So I implore you - buy their album, support the school of hard knocks. Hell, a mind is a terrible thing to taste.

KILLDOZER
today NYU
tomorrow...?



Philly's had a reputation as a dead town since before W.C.Fields quipped that he spent a week there one night... But that doesn't stop the City of Brotherly Love from turning out some pretty good bands: The Johnsons, Dead Milkmen, Red Buckets... and add to that list the Endorphins, whose two new cassette releases showcase a wide-ranging collection of talents, a combo equally adept at arty new-wave filigree, slashing punk, and gutbucket bar-band covers of the Velvet and the Monkees.

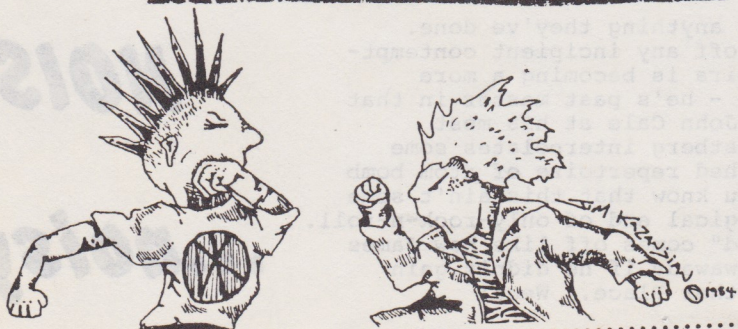
Paul Albert does most of the songwriting, and while he lacks a strong melodic sensibility, his songs boast memorably original lyrics and forceful changes that keep them running through yr head. On "Swank Bar Live '85," the in-concert cassette, the 'dorphins reveal a lively sense of humor (covering "Mary Mary" and "The Beat Goes On") and the killer instincts of a seasoned garage-combo.

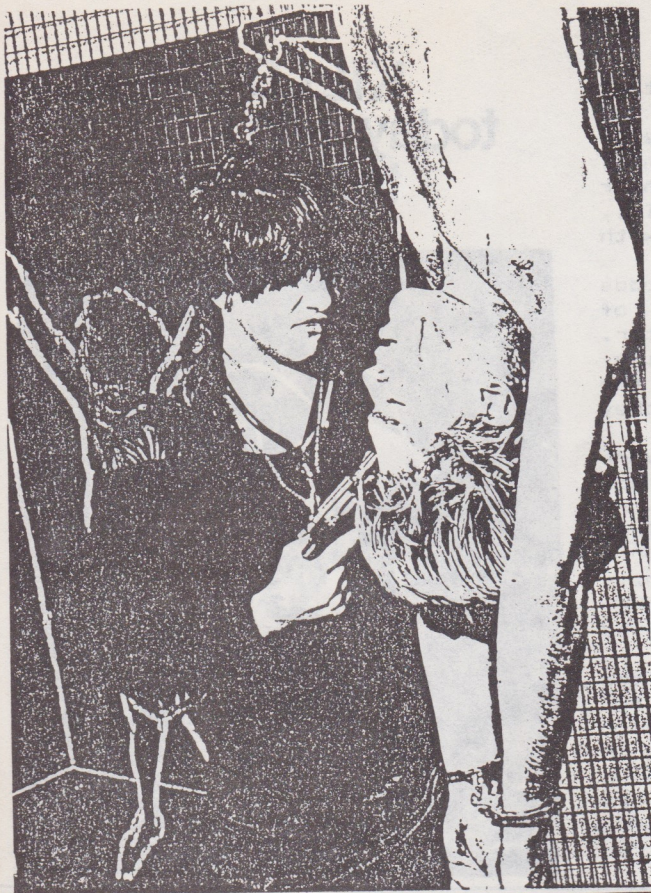
ENDORPHINS



On "European Dolomite," the studio cassette, the Endorphins go for a grittier sound - distorted slashing guitars, growling vocals, a few primitive cave-teen stomps - but they're not afraid to mix it up; their computer-synth instrumental segues into some post-REM pop with rich harmonies and ringing chords.

You can't peg the Endorphins as a garage band; the group's too interested in exploring new sounds for the revivalist 6T's bag. And they're too good at rocking out a dancebeat to be tagged as one of those new-wave danceclub turntable sensations whose songs fade from mind as soon as the next 120-beats per minute starts booming from the p.a. Hopefully they'll leave Philly long enough to give us Northerners a taste of their live side, and in the meantime their two cassettes are available for \$5.75 each postpaid from Endorphins, 4606 Springfield Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19143.





Lydia

by Howard Wuelfing

THE UNCENSORED...

Lydia Lunch

Widowspeak import cassette

How naked can you strip the script of rock 'n roll and still turn out something that makes you wanna twist 'n' shout 'n' ram your fist through a convenient plate glass window? This year, that's the question 8 out of 10 hep kats 'n' kittens seem to be posing on one spoken-word recording after another. Everyone and their paperboy seems to be making 'em!

Without a doubt, Lydia Lunch's The Uncensored is my fave, tho. Could be 'cos she's had the most practice having begun recitative dabbings on her "Queen Of Siam" solo way back when. Fuq! I'm not sure why she's gotten so good at it but the five readings on this cassette bespeak a formidable grasp of Anglo syntax & colloquial vernacular further shaped by an unmistakably rock 'n roll feel for the repetition and vulgar, sensationalistic imagery. Then there's that voice! Not only can she do without instrumental accompaniment, the lack thereof coaxes amazing mutant mellifluity in same hitherto unheard even on her relatively more orthodox rockist outings. No! Ain't overall better. Just differ'nt. Fresh -- a dandy trick considering how long and ably she's applied herself to the pop arts.

If I were trained in enumeration of literary quality I'd do that here too. Manifestly 'tis a durned wunnerful bit o' lit. But that jargon ain't at my command. Leave it suffice I do know wheat from chaff and if I shredded this stuff, I'd happily spoon it up by the bowlful for breakfast, OK??

LYDIA LUNCH and friend
from BLACK BOX, @ 1978

SAMHAIN
Unholy Passion
Plan 9, EP



This 2nd record from Samhain extends singer/songwriter Glenn Danzig's vision of the world-as-splatter flick, a weltanschauung he parlayed into a minor legend as honcho for the late, lamented Misfits. Unholy Passion is a skimpy EP for the money - barely 15 minutes of music retailing for 6 bucks - but what little it offers does deliver: "Unholy Passion" is a moaning dirge while "All Hell" and "Moribund" rekindle the Misfits hellfire punk. "The Hungry End" is the killer cut, though, exploding with call-and-response hardcore passion like vintage Minor Threat. With Danzig's eerie voice keening over the blurry wall-of-noise guitars, this should satisfy Misfits fans starving for a fix while providing something new for post-hardcore headbangers searching for a sound that's loud & angry but more than pure thrash.

(PO Box 41200, Lodi, NJ 07644)

- Jim Testa

by Howard Wuelfing

Swans, Raping A Slave, K22/Homestead

Yipes! This new Swans EP sound so thick, hard and concerted it's IMPOSSIBLE not to imagine it as the accompaniment to some apotheotheical sorta sex act. Or maybe I just have a dirty mind. BUT there is obliteration of superego functioning and amplification of the id that can occur if you listen to Raping A Slave at the maximum dB levels prescribed on the jacket; it all suggests the throes of sexual abandon too. Or maybe I just have a sick mind. But...

I think this EP is just swell, as good as anything they've done. And there's evolution here, thus warding off any incipient contempt-breeding via over-familiarity. Michael Gira is becoming a more accomplished singer (as opposed to yowler - he's past master in that field already) reminding moi at times of John Cale at his most maniacal circling Helen Of Troy. Norman Westberg interpolates some skin-peeling geetar lix into his established repertoire of atom bomb drops and banshee keening so as to let you know that this ain't some alien caca-phoney messin' but only the logical end of only-rock-n-roll. That's scary!! SO, the end of "Young God" comes off like how James Marshall H. would render "Purple Haze" nowawady if he didn't gain entry to rock 'n' roll heaven up in The Other Place. Weee!

Yeah, Raping A Slave is another good 'un from the party boys of '80's wreck 'n roll.

Swans...

NOISE

NOISE

...noisy!

THE TERRIBLE WORLD OF SONIC YOUTH

BAD MOON RISING
Sonic Youth
Homestead, LP

There are too many other things in the world that hurt to justify listening to Sonic Youth. 'Course if music that sharpens the edge of psychic awareness and plumbs the depths of human anguish is your idea of stimulation, then by all means...

Sonic Youth: unnerving metallic cacophony, threatening electronic distortion, focused vocal intensity; a symphony of horrors, and not the cheap scares & chills of splatter-flicks or a band like, say, Samhain, but real human horror. The horror of suffering and tortured minds and mental illness. Even when Thurston Moore sings a "love" song, the edge of desperation rattles your nerves. Just the thing at 3 a.m. when you can't sleep and still crave nightmares. "Death Valley '69" with Lydia Lunch rocks out like Chuck Berry compared to the rest of the LP, but it's still a mind-rending experience, a psychotic tour through (I think) Mansonland. Helter skelter. Buy this record and lose some sleep.

- J.T.



Young Turks ...again

by Bruce Lee Gallanter

YOUNG TURKS - 5-song cassette

Their spirit matures, expands, and explodes once again. The now studio-based Young Turks continue their rampage with 5 new songs to scald our brains and souls. Every aspect of their sound gets deeper, more refined, yet always absorbing...

1. "I Forget" - The immense propulsion of an uptempo marching band erupts with a gripping force; as exhilarating as any recent hardcore of note. Truly passionate singing/feeling from Billy Snow.

2. "Calm Down" - Give in to the alien force, that thick and spooky guitar sound, the '60's through '80's voodoo rush. Mesmerizing in a disturbing way. Billy's ever-expanding guitar talents mix with some funk hipness at bottom, a cosmic blur with a spasto bumblebee driving rhythmic scheme.

3. "Battle of the Day Glo Death Chickens" - Great title. From the lovely acoustic piano/guitar intro to the European folk-dance groove, an entire story whizzes by, too quickly to grasp at first listen. The band spins smoothly through quick changes like seasoned pros.

4. "Last Swing In The Goldmine" - A very strange tune, featuring Billy's unique slide guitar. The bass throbs well at center, a distant blues relative.

5. "Swan's World" - New ground again as Millicent Kittay takes a lead vocal (her first!) and does a lovely job, almost bitter-sweet. The subtle bite of the guitar is truly supportive of the spiritual feeling that bubbles throughout this offering. "If beauty is only skin deep, does ugly go all the way through?" asks Millicent.

Rumor has it that the majors are finally interested in the Young Turks. With over an LP's worth of material released, the Turks continue to churn out great songs with no end in sight. It is time for the masses to check out their sound at length.



minor threat salad days

SALAD DAYS
Minor Threat
Dischord

Even when it came to saying good-bye, they said it better than anybody else.

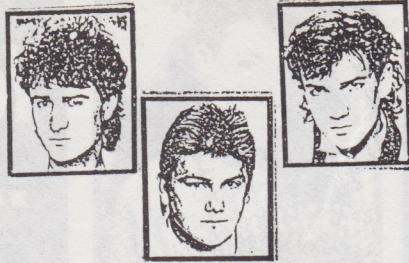
Minor Threat's "new" EP is actually a two-year old recording; what's uncanny is that they could have written and recorded a song so perfectly aware of their own dead-end plight before breaking up. "Salad Days" is a classic - the usual Minor Threat powercore sound, one of Ian's best vocals ever, and a lyric that sums it all up: "Do you remember the good old days?" Ian asks, in a voice both nostalgic and bitter. "They were a fucking lie." Yeah, Minor Threat had nowhere to go but down, catering to empty-headed stagedivers more interested in asking them about where they'd been than where they could go next. Those were their "Salad Days" and Minor Threat wisely gave it up - "the core was getting soft," Ian says - before giving in to mediocrity. The flipside has "Stumped," kind of a goof, and "Good Guys (Don't Wear White)," which suggests that if the Threat hadn't dissolved, they might have evolved into the most powerful garage band on the planet - which is not to say they weren't that already. Rest in peace, guys; you earned it.

- Jim Testa

Dischord, 3819 Beecher St. NW, Washington DC 20007

fanzines

BROKEN PROMISES



BROKEN PROMISES
Broken Promises
EP, Broccoli Rabe Records

This beautifully produced EP from the new Broccoli-Rabe studios in Fairfield, NJ, introduces Broken Promises, a baby-faced trio from Edison featuring the Page brothers, Bill (lead vocals and guitar) and Tommy (keyboards & backing vocals), and drummer Tiger Senif. Like most young bands, Broken Promises draw a bit too heavily from their FM heroes, in this case most noticeably the Cars (a STRONG influence on these kids) and Cheap Trick. Still, for a first effort, the Promises' jangly, three-chord new-wave pop makes for a promising beginning. You might think I'm crazy, but the BP's shake it up for these ears just fine.

- J.T.

REASONS FOR LIVING #1
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a/k/a Jim DeRogatis' term paper for Journalism School. This whopping big 'zine lets local cognoscenti (all the Jersey Beat crew, Art Black, Bill Ryan, WFMU jock Frank. O'Toole et. al.) gush about their "reasons for living." Positive idealism from hardcore collectors & music junkies and fun reading.

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Chris Moffa

has bought a new guitar. He and drummer Jim Ohm (formerly of Chris Moffa and the Competition) are auditioning bass and keyboard players. Any takers? Call (201) 487-2430.

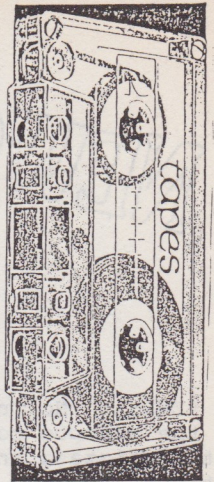




Radically Innocent

Radical Innocence is a relatively new combo working the Dirt Club circuit whose long suit is a gently rocking reggae-flavored beat that permeates all their material. On the band's current 3-song demo tape, singer/guitarist Don Neary shows a flair for the breezy, bouncy lilt of reggae-pop, and his singing rings with clever wordplay (the man rhymes everything). John Takakjian's keyboards fill in the band's sound with thick chordal melodies and drummer Perry Cavari keeps it all moving deftly. As the name implies, Radical Innocence comes at club rock n roll with a wide-eyed appreciation for their heroes (I'd guess the Police figure heavily here) and an admirable command of what they want to do themselves musically. Nothing radical here, but innocence is always appreciated.

- J.T.



ZERO

ZERO
4-song demo cassette

Nicky Williams has a high, distinctive, often angelic voice that occasionally has that Buddy Holly-like purity of tone. He's done numerous folk gigs and impressed all at the Alternative Folk Fest held at the Jetty last January with a lovely set full of memorable lyrics and gentle ironies. Williams, who hails from Elmwood Park, also fronts an excellent rock trio known as Zero, who have been around since '82 in various combinations. Nick, besides lead vocals, also plays mucho chiming, layered guitar parts. The trio also consists of Robert Cavallero on synth and Robert Albanese on drums. Even without a bass, their sound is full and appealing, with a zesty, positive feel; completely modern.

On their new 4-song demo cassette, "Sandra" starts things with its cute & catchy pop tune (some Elvic C. influence?). "The Time Is Now" reminds me of early Yes, when they approached power-pop with great chimey guitars and strong harmonies. "I Will Too" is still more happy space pop, not unlike U2, with shimmering guitars and vocals modified in various, effective ways. "Science Fiction" is their mini-epic, with modern-day Byrds-like harmonies, in a multi-layered haze of shining, almost orchestral beauty. Zero has developed quite a distinctive identity. Catch them soon.



photo by Cindy Mendes

CHRISTOPHER JONES
VERBAL ASSAULT

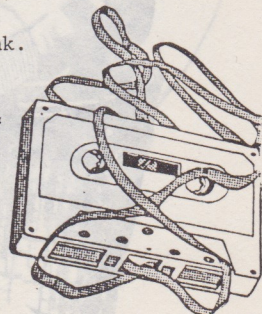
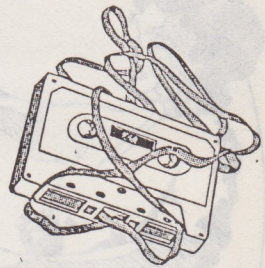
VERBAL ASSAULT

THE MASSES
Verbal Assault
10-song cassette

Rhode Island's Verbal Assault's got all the requisite hardcore pyrotechnics down: buzzsaw guitar from Peter Chromiec, Nick Barbato's rat-a-tat-tat drumming, and Christopher Jones' ranting mile-a-minute vocals. It's the lyrics that intrigue and set these songs apart: post-Minor Threat hardcore humanism, thinking man's punk. "Personal Edge" rejects the evangelical bent of the Straight Edge philosophy even as it reaffirms its principles; "Real Life" rants against the pat answers & clichés of so many other h-c anthems; and "Real Life," like Minor Threat's best work, expresses deeply felt convictions with the simple eloquence of haiku: "Can we really feel the screaming pain/of the tortured millions with forgotten names?/All our trials, worries and fears/seem so petty when compared to theirs./And yet my pain feels real enough." Check 'em out.

- J.T.

Verbal Assault, c/o Chris Jones, 20 Bateman Ave., Newport, Rhode Island 02840.



NEWCOMERS ARE NEAT!

RULA LENZKA: No, not the flouncy has-been British actress from the shampoo commercials, but a new Hoboken combo with a lot of pizzazz and a passel of smoking new songs that just might put the Pow! back into Power Pop.

Start with Chris Gibson, the band's hyper-animated frontman, who puts across every number with the kind of manic passion most singers save for their encores. Joe Bosso's the boss guitar man, with an endless supply of hooks and catchy riffs. The rhythm section, anchored by Jack Krim's melodic bass and driven by Mark Reynolds' steady downbeats, provides a lively, danceable pulse beneath waves of jangly melody. Fans of the Shoes and the Rubinoos will find lots to remember and plenty to love in Rula Lenzka's heady, sincerely driven pop mix.

The band's current 2-song demo lends an idea of what they can do live: "Maybe" is a catchy carryover from Bosso's days in My 3 Sons, an earlier pop combo which featured Rage To Live's Rich Grula; and "Watch Out (Run To Me)" showcases the new group's strong songwriting and dedicated popcraft. Tight, catchy, driving, and fun, but a long way from being slick, Rula Lenzka's going to be heard from, even with a name that sounds like a brand of Polish toothpaste.

- Jim Testa

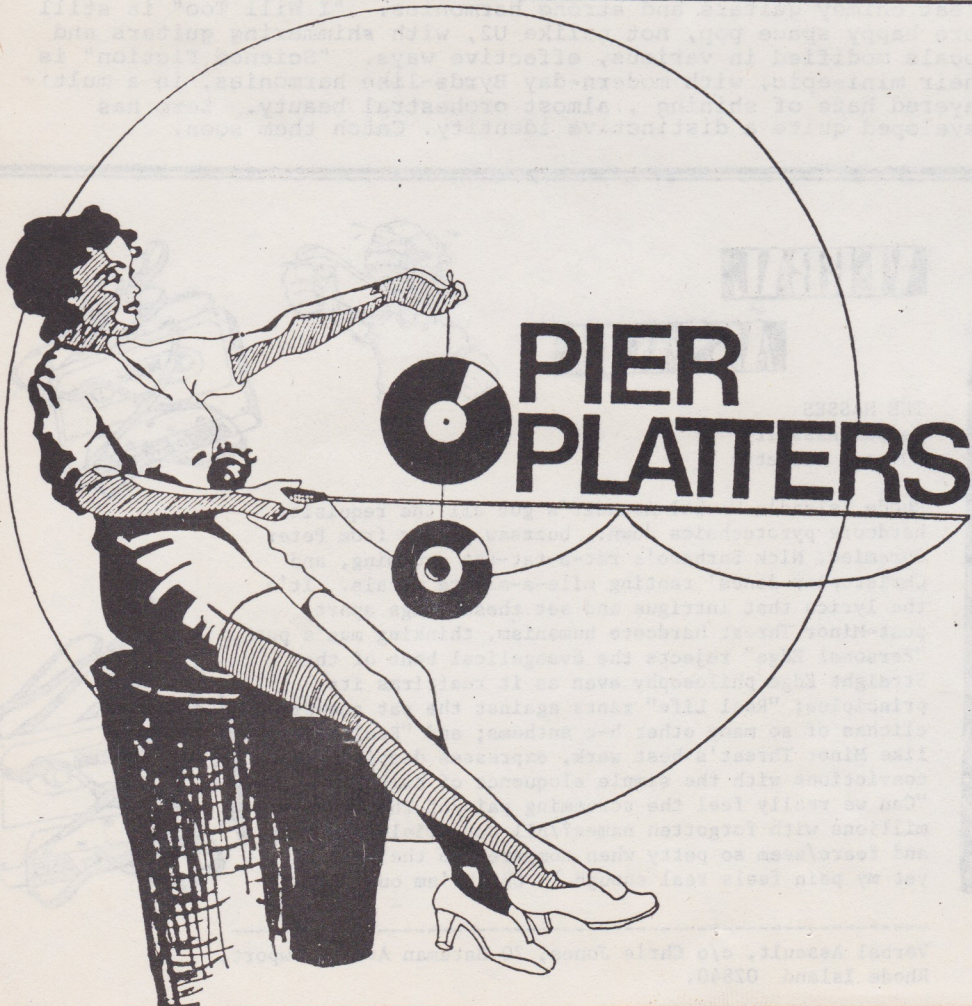


RULA LENZKA

RULA THUMB:

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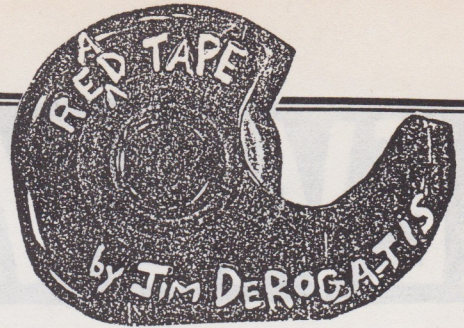
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ONE BLOCK FROM
P A T H

RED TAPE

by jim derogatis



JERSEY BEAT'S demo mailbox filled to overflowing since we last met, so I'll get right down to business with the weirdest tape of the batch, an 18-song cassette from Bandaido & the Any Surface Band. Bandaido is a basement studio wiz with a wry wit akin to R. Stevie Moore's. This tape is full of musical jokes, recorded with a Casio and a Synsonics drum box. But it all wears thin after a while. Still, inspired moments like "Rocket To The Disco" make it worth listening to.

What Spinal Tap was to heavy metal, NJ supergroup Generic Youth is to hardcore. GY's 5-song, live-in-Rahway cassette is a blast, taking well-deserved knocks at all the right musical and lyrical cliches. Among the topics tackled: drugs, religion, cops, peace, love, unity and, of course, Ronald Reagan ("I don't like Reagan/He's old!"). Loud fast fun.

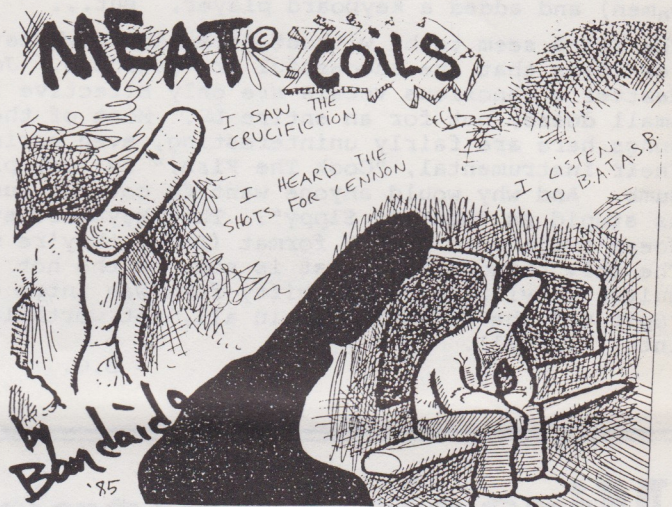
We reviewed Amor Fati's EP a while back and since then, mainman Amaury Perez has compiled a 10 1/2 song cassette featuring more of the same wonderful droning/pounding/buzzing anguish and despair-filled soul rapping. A hard PIL to swallow? Hell no, I LIKE angst on occasion.

Life In A Blender offers insanity in a different vein with their 4-song tape: Weird sounds, off-the-wall lyrics, and styles as diverse as Dylan and the Beach Boys abound, as do some classic hooks. Pick hits: "Wet Cement" ("You know she's there/lying in wet cement") and the song about love behind the "Dirtpile."

Maximum America followed their debut EP with a 2-song cassette bearing all the marks of Eurodisco: chanted vocals, dense guitar, and synth, a loud bass, and insistent drums. "March of Drums" plods but "Love And Anger" speeds things up and sounds made for huge dancefloors.

There's also a big sound on Urban Allies' new 2-song demo, their first since adding a second guitarist/keyboardist. "Time" and "Hired Gun" are good songs but the arrangements are top heavy and overly busy. The Allies are still honing their sound.

Finally, we have a trio of tapes from the post-R.E.M. garage: Subliminal Fault has a 10-song cassette with some spirited playing and a number of familiar covers ("Pale Blue Eyes," "So You Wanna Be A Rock N Roll Star") but their originals lack staying power; Neutral Zone has a similar problem - their six songs have nothing to draw you in, altho the guitars and keyboards are on the money. The Selves however have three out of four hits on their demo. The singing needs some work and there are some obvious cops (the "Tax Man" bass riff, etc.) but the tape leaves you hummin' and that's good enough for me.



Bands - send your demos for review to Read Tape, c/o Jersey Beat, 418 Gregory Ave, Weehawken, NJ 07087.

REVIEWS

IN A CHALK CIRCLE
Figures
TwinTone, LP

I can't get past Jeff Waryan's voice, a flat, raspy instrument which strikes me as unsuited to the soaring, melodic pop he writes (imagine John Cale doing R.E.M.). Still, Waryan and his band of Minneapolisian backups, the Figures, do have a pretty, lilting grace that grows on one, and on "All I Can Feel" (lead vocal by drummer Jay Peck, ex-Crackers and Let's Active), all qualms dissolve under the spell of Waryan's and Steve Brantseg's silky guitars.
B minus

- J.T.

PULL THE PLUG
Youth In Asia
Mutha Records, LP

After digging their demo tape of last year so much, I found this LP to be very disappointing on a number of levels. True, since I dug their demo, they lost guitarist Jim Shankar (to Das Dämen) and added a keyboard player. But...

The YIA's seem to be without direction & whatever few ideas that are successful are overdone. John Heatter's obnoxious vocals are only effective in small doses, not for an entire LP. Most of the songs here are fairly uninteresting, even boring. Their instrumental, "Cook The Fish," is just plain dumb. And why would anyone want to cover a tune as stupid as "Hang On Sllppy"? Their keyboardist doesn't fit into a punk format (TSOL, they're not!). The only thing of interest is some of the hot guitar playing, esp. the nifty fuzz/wah intro to "Spit Out The Bones." All in all, not worth looking into. Oh well.

- B.G.

TERMINAL
Windbreakers
Homestead, LP

Similar in tone & texture to Jeff Waryan's Figures, but with warmer vocal harmonies, better hooks, and a deeper, richer sound: Is this the pop record of 1985 or what?? Drive-In Studio production has never sounded better, full of ringing layers of guitars, guitars, guitars, topped by Tim Lee and Bobby Sutcliffe's engaging vocals. Dig the hick cover of Television's "Glory" (backup by the Rain Parade); marvel to the garagey song-writing elevated to Big Star pop epiphany by Mitch Easter's best production since Afoot. And the liner notes say they did it all with a drum machine! Now if these guys just had a band!!

A plus
- J.T.

Miracle Legion's new EP 'THE BACKYARD'

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DRESS IN BLACK
Blackjacks
Throbbing Lobster, LP

The Blackjacks' rep as the bad boys of Boston frat-rock should get a long-overdue overhaul thanks to this LP, which showcases Johnny Angel's penchant for wordy songwriting (ala' Ray Davies) and some tuneful forays into new-wave pop. If anything, the mix is too clean (more guitars next time, guys!) and does the jacket really say, "There are no profanities on this record"? Yup. P.S. The Stones cover does indeed kick ass and points in the right direction.

B plus
- J.T.

THROB THROB
Naked Raygun
Homestead, LP

I understand much of the material here has been previously released, but it's all new to me and verrrry impressive. Not since the first time I heard Husker Du has an ostensible "punk/hardcore" band bowled me over with so much melody, intensity, and smarts. The Rayguns do all the usual hardcore stuff - urban thrash, speed/energy guitar, and blitzkrieg percussion - but their metal has been welded to such bright, flashy melodies that the thrash does what it was meant to do in the first place - energizes the material, not subsumes it with dissonance. And they have a sense of humor too. Inspirational verse: "When you're born you start to die/don't know from what and you don't know why."

A
- J.T.

by "Metal Mike" Ferris

Attacker

visits

54

BEA

METALHEAD!



ATTACKER, OBSESSION, FATES WARNING
Studio 54, Manhattan
April 24, 1985

Studio 54 stuffed the luxury up its wazoo for tis Heavy Metal Wednesday and opened the velvet ropes outside to all manner of teenaged cretins looking to bang heads to some Metal. Well, it sorta worked out that way, and anyhow, it was an experience...

Okay, so let's start with the locale: Studio 54 usually caters to the hoi polloi, snow-snorting pseudo-celebs, but tonight the crowd was strictly glue-sniffin' teens, about 6-to-1 male to female (if you think hardcore gigs are some kinda male puberty rite, you gotta check out these heavy-metal fandangos); usually, the clientele here favors Chams de Baron and the bartenders go shirtless, but tonight it was black t-shirts all around and everybody in the joint wore jeans. Studio 54 is also commonly thought of as a place where people go to dance; well, lemme tell ya... New wavers dance to records and punks dance to bands, but headbangers just do not dance at all - altho a few of 'em played some righteous air-guitar for the delectation of the throng. This particular night was also the most poorly attended of these H-M soirees, so mebbe you better call it a throngette.

Now for da show: Openers were Hoboken High's headbangin' heroes Attacker. They took to the stage about 9:30 p.m., not bad for a weeknight, and boy, did they bite the big one: Rangy, goofy-looking, pencil-necked geeks on guitar and bass, a drummer who couldn't seem to find the beat with a hairdo that most labrador retrievers would kill for, and this awkward, paunchy lead singer with a voice so high, only dogs and trained ninjas could hear his falsettos. I mean, we are talking squeal here - kinda like a AC/DC 45 cranked up to 78 RPM.

Well, Attacker didn't get to make an LP for Metal Blade on their looks, obviously, so it wasn't too surprising when they finally got it together: Once they hit the fast stuff, they got crankin'! The sound melded into a double guitar piledriver attack and those screamin' vocals wailed, hyperdecibels piercing the air like a dentist's drill. By the time they got to their theme song, "The Attacker," these boiz were wailin'!! "Attacker" may be their only tune with a melody, but it's a hot one, pounding screaming mindbending heavymetal thunder all the way. By the end of the set, the boys had done their hometown proud, the kids in front peeled their ears off the speaker columns and melted into small black puddles, and a good time wuz had by all.

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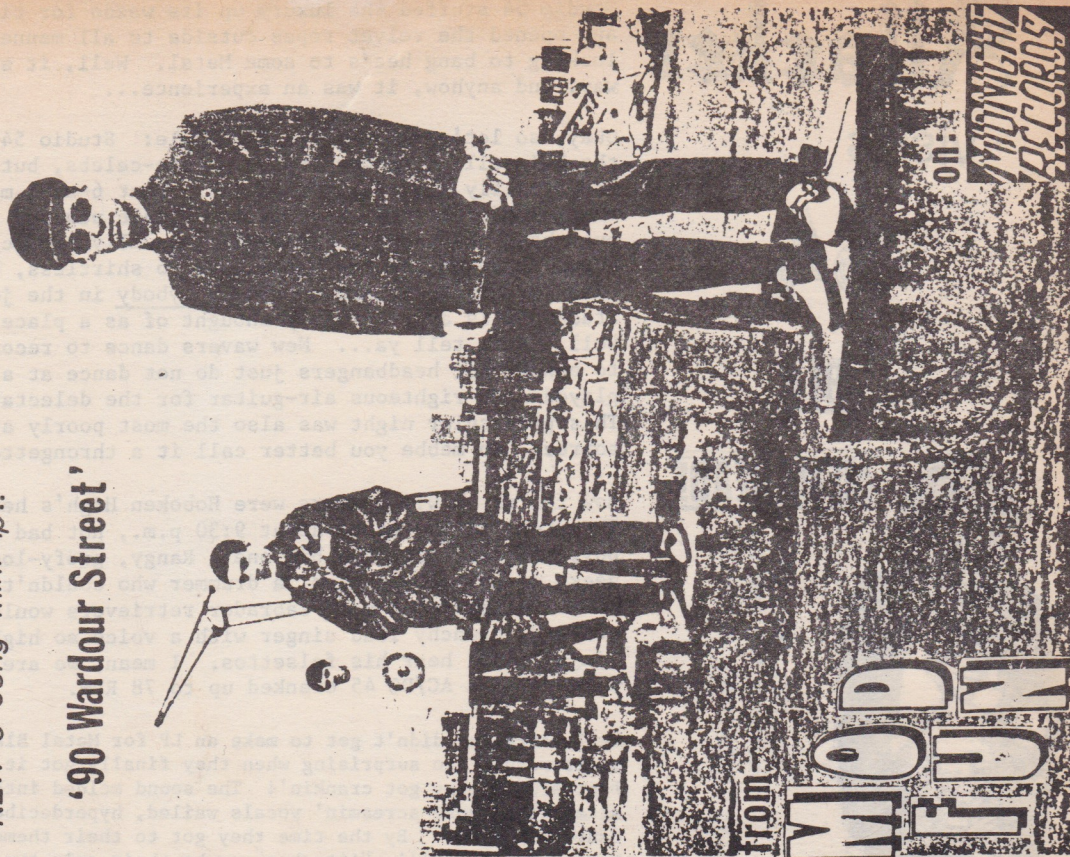


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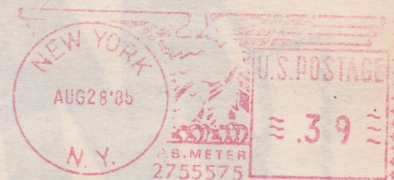
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